

CLAIMS

1. An improvement in a system for automatically monitoring the operational status of one or more copier machines from a remote location, each copier machine having a copier control computer for determining copier status, comprising means for monitoring status information from the copier control computer, a translator associated with each copier including means to adapt status information from the specific copier machine into uniform status information for transmission to the remote location and means for transmitting information between the translator of each copier and the remote location, said improvement comprising a two component translator, said components to communicate by means for communication, wherein the first component is located within the copier machine and comprises a smart tap, comprising a voltage level converter, means to adapt status information specific to the copier machine it services to uniform status information, and a central processing unit (CPU) to process the status information and transmit and receive communications between the first and second components, and the second component comprises a universal component, not specific copier machine dependent, located external to the copier machine comprising a central processing unit (CPU) which receives information from the first component and transmits said information to the remote location.

2. The system of Claim 1 further comprising means to poll the translator for each copier machine, to obtain copier machine status information, from the remote location.

3. The system of Claim 2 wherein the means to poll the translator of each copier machine comprises a scanner.

4. The system of Claim 2 further comprising a central computer at the remote location to poll, assemble and format the status information from the one or more copier machines.

5. The system of Claim 4 further comprising a user interface at the remote location wherein a user can review copier status information on command.

5 6. The system of Claim 2 further comprising means to vary the polling rate of the specific translators to allow a user to poll all translators at a uniform rate without specific priority to any one translator or polling a priority of one or more translators with a reduced polling rate of the remaining translators.

10 7. The system of Claim 1 wherein the means of communication between said components comprises fiber optic cables.

15 8. The system of Claim 1 further comprising a non-volatile read only memory in said first component having an identification data pattern which is transmitted to the second component and on to the remote location with the status information for identification of the specific copier within a network.

20 9. The system of Claim 1 further comprising means to shut down one or more copier machines from the remote location.

25 10. The system of Claim 1 further comprising means to provide remote input operation to allow control panel keystrokes to be remotely generated comprising means to input comments at the remote location to be received by the first component of the translator and means to simulate keystrokes within the copier.

30 11. The system of Claim 10 wherein the means to input commands at the remote location comprises a keyboard on a central computer.

35 12. The system of Claim 10 wherein the means to simulate keystrokes within the copier comprises a set of latches in the first component of the translator aligned in parallel with the copier control keys read by the copier control computer.

• 13. The system of Claim 1 wherein the means for transmitting information and commands between the translator for each copier and the remote location is taken from the group comprising telephone lines, hardwiring, fiber optics
5 and RF transmission/reception.

14. The system of Claim 1 further comprising means to read keystrokes generated on the copier from the remote location.

10 15. The system of Claim 14 wherein the means to read keystrokes generated on the copier from the remote location comprises a predetermined number of latches within the first component of the translator, said latches capturing column sense signals generated by keystrokes on the copier keyboard and at the remote location and read by the copier control computer to activate a specific function, wherein the
15 latches are read by the central processing unit of the first component and evaluated for copier specific information which
20 is transmitted to the remote location.

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